

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 1, without prejudice, add new claims 28 to 36 and amend the claims as follows:

1. (canceled)
2. (canceled)
3. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 24, wherein when exiting from the media nozzle the media flow is enveloped by an oxygen-containing working gas flow.
4. (previously presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein the working gas flow turbulently exits from a first working gas nozzle of the deposition burner that is designed as a diffuser.
5. (previously presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein when exiting from the working gas nozzle the working gas flow is enveloped by at least one oxygen-containing separating gas flow exiting from an annular gap nozzle coaxially surrounding the working gas nozzle.
6. (previously presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein the plasma zone is produced by high-frequency excitation inside a burner tube into which a mixture of media flow and working gas flow is introduced.
7. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 24, wherein the glass starting material in the media flow contains silicon tetrachloride ( $\text{SiCl}_4$ ) and the carrier gas is nitrogen.

8. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 24, wherein the glass starting material contains a fluorine-containing component.

9. to 21. (canceled)

22. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 24, wherein the multi-nozzle deposition burner includes a plurality of additional nozzles, said additional nozzles having cylindrical walls concentric with and surrounding the media nozzle, said cylindrical walls of the additional nozzles defining annular gaps between each other and around the media nozzle.

23. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 24, wherein the media nozzle tapers in a tapering portion towards the plasma zone.

24. (currently amended) **A method for producing a preform from synthetic quartz glass by a plasma-assisted deposition process, said method comprising: supplying a hydrogen-free media flow containing a glass starting material and a carrier gas to a multi-nozzle deposition burner, introducing the glass starting material by the deposition burner into a plasma zone wherein the glass starting material is oxidized so as to form SiO<sub>2</sub> particles, and depositing the SiO<sub>2</sub> particles on a deposition surface while being directly vitrified, wherein the deposition burner focuses the media flow towards the plasma zone, and wherein the deposition burner includes a media nozzle that focuses the media flow onto the plasma zone, said media nozzle having a wall defining a passage therein communicating with a nozzle opening so that media flow passes through the passage and through the nozzle opening, said wall being configured so that, adjacent to the nozzle opening, the passage tapers in the direction of the plasma zone, The method according to** ~~claim 23~~, wherein the tapering portion has a length of at least 5 mm.

25. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~23~~ 24, wherein the length of the tapering area ~~has a length of~~ is at least 8 mm.
26. (currently amended) A method for producing a preform from synthetic quartz glass by a plasma-assisted deposition process, said method comprising: supplying a hydrogen-free media flow containing a glass starting material and a carrier gas to a multi-nozzle deposition burner, introducing the glass starting material by the deposition burner into a plasma zone wherein the glass starting material is oxidized so as to form SiO<sub>2</sub> particles, and depositing the SiO<sub>2</sub> particles on a deposition surface while being directly vitrified, wherein the deposition burner focuses the media flow towards the plasma zone, and wherein the deposition burner includes a media nozzle that focuses the media flow onto the plasma zone, said media nozzle having a wall defining a passage therein communicating with a nozzle opening so that media flow passes through the passage and through the nozzle opening, said wall being configured so that, adjacent to the nozzle opening, the passage tapers in the direction of the plasma zone, The method according to claim 1, wherein the nozzle opening ranges between 4.5 mm and 6.5 mm in diameter.
27. (currently amended) The method according to claim ~~1~~ 26, wherein the nozzle opening ranges between 5.0 mm and 6.5 mm in diameter.
28. (new) The method according to claim 26, wherein when exiting from the media nozzle the media flow is enveloped by an oxygen-containing working gas flow.
29. (new) The method according to claim 28, wherein the working gas flow turbulently exits from a first working gas nozzle of the deposition burner that is designed as a diffuser.

30. (new) The method according to claim 29, wherein when exiting from the working gas nozzle the working gas flow is enveloped by at least one oxygen-containing separating gas flow exiting from an annular gap nozzle coaxially surrounding the working gas nozzle.
31. (new) The method according to claim 28, wherein the plasma zone is produced by high-frequency excitation inside a burner tube into which a mixture of media flow and working gas flow is introduced.
32. (new) The method according to claim 26, wherein the glass starting material in the media flow contains silicon tetrachloride ( $\text{SiCl}_4$ ) and the carrier gas is nitrogen.
33. (new) The method according to claim 26, wherein the glass starting material contains a fluorine-containing component.
34. (new) The method according to claim 26, wherein the multi-nozzle deposition burner includes a plurality of additional nozzles, said additional nozzles having cylindrical walls concentric with and surrounding the media nozzle, said cylindrical walls of the additional nozzles defining annular gaps between each other and around the media nozzle.
35. (new) The method according to claim 26, wherein the media nozzle tapers in a tapering portion towards the plasma zone.
36. (new) The method according to claim 24, wherein the nozzle opening ranges between 4.5 mm and 6.5 mm in diameter.